

Appendix D

Cost Comparison

A. Cost Comparison Analysis

Teton County contains numerous developments, subdivisions and Communities separated by miles of mountainous terrain and agricultural lands. There are approximately 3,000 homes and 3 incorporated communities within Teton County. Much of the southern, eastern and southwest areas of Teton County are at high risk to wildfires. Of the homes within the County over 120 of them are located in areas with high or extreme risk to wildfires. Hazardous fuel reduction, increased wildfire emergency services, and improved county emergency services communications can mitigate risk to life and property in Teton County.

A sample of 110 Teton County residential homes taken from numerous different locations at high or extreme wildfire risk within the County yielded an averaged assessed value of \$259,771 per residence and property. Property values are included because of historic post wildfire declines in property values and rehabilitation costs or expenses in mountainous terrain. Fifteen percent of this average was added for personal property in the homes. This provided the total average value of \$298,736 per residence and property. Using an average value of \$298,736 the total estimated value of Teton County homes at high or extreme wildfire risk is \$35,848,320. Add to this the value of county assets including county structures, communication sites, the estimated total value of assets at risk to wildfire is over \$200,000,000. This total does not include the value of timber resources, or expense in protection of watersheds, and vegetation rehabilitation or soil erosion control efforts after a wildfire.

Mitigation Recommendation Costs, Teton County

Estimated costs for wildfire mitigation recommendations within Teton County are \$100,000 for County wide road side, private and developed lands hazardous fuel reduction and vegetation disposal-mitigation recommendation number 7, hazard priority 5.

Estimated costs for emergency services communication requirements include \$60,000 for County and Fire Department Communications, mitigation recommendation number 1 and 2, and 3.

Teton County Fire Departments will identify priorities such as additional training, PPE, equipment and engines, brush trucks and water tenders, cost estimates are \$300,000 provided in mitigation recommendation number 4.

B. BENEFITS OF MITIGATION

Stakeholders evaluating the economic benefits of mitigation should consider numerous “direct” scenarios, including, but not limited to avoiding:

- Building/property damages
- Content damages
- Inventory damages
- Rental income losses
- Relocation and disruption expenses
- Proprietor’s income losses

Some of “indirect” effects to consider, (positive or negative) include changes to the following:

- Commodity and resource prices
- Availability of resource supplies
- Building and land values
- Capital availability and interest rates
- Availability of labor
- Economic structure
- Infrastructure
- Local, State, and Federal regulations and policies
- Insurance availability and rates

Total economic impacts are the sum of direct and indirect economic impacts. Decision makers should understand the total economic impacts of natural disasters in order to calculate the benefits of a mitigation activity.

Additionally, it must be realized that benefit/cost analysis, when used alone, may divert attention from other important issues. It is important to consider the qualitative factors of a project associated with mitigation that cannot be evaluated economically. There are alternatives. Many communities and developments are considering developing multi-objective projects, including: integration of natural hazard mitigation with projects related to watersheds, wildfire protection, environmental planning, community economic development, and small business development.